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The President's Daily Brief

12 November 1973

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

12 November 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

There have been no reports of fighting since Egyptian and Israeli representatives signed the six-point agreement yesterday. In Tel Aviv, leaders of the opposition group, Likud, have come out against the accord; they claim that Mrs. Meir's government lacks a mandate to speak for Israel. The controversy over Dayan's handling of the war has also grown more intense. Meanwhile, a Soviet official in Cairo has commented on the role of Soviet surface-to-surface missiles in Egypt. *(Page 1)*

The West Germans may be prepared to sign a treaty of reconciliation and to establish diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia before their demands on the West Berlin legal assistance question are fully satisfied. This probably would lead to early establishment of diplomatic relations with Hungary and Bulgaria as well, completing the treaty framework of Ostpolitik. *(Page 4)*

All Arab oil producers that signed the agreement on November 4 to reduce production by 25 percent seem to be complying. Libya and Algeria, neither of which fully carried out the first agreement in October, apparently are falling in line this time. *(Page 5)*

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Text of the Egyptian-Israeli Agreement
Signed on 11 November 1973:

--Egypt and Israel agree to observe scrupulously the cease-fire called for by the UN Security Council.

--Both sides agree that discussions between them will begin immediately to settle the question of the return to the October 22 positions in the framework of agreement on the disengagement and separation of forces under the auspices of the UN.

--The town of Suez will receive daily supplies of food, water and medicine. All wounded civilians in the town of Suez will be evacuated.

--There shall be no impediment to the movement of non-military supplies to the East Bank.

--The Israeli checkpoints on the Cairo-Suez road will be replaced by UN checkpoints. At the Suez end of the road Israeli officers can participate with the UN to supervise the non-military nature of the cargo at the bank of the Canal.

--As soon as the UN checkpoints are established on the Cairo-Suez road, there will be an exchange of all prisoners of war, including wounded.

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ARAB STATES - ISRAEL

After signing the six-point agreement yesterday, Egyptian and Israeli representatives met with UN officials to discuss implementing it. An Egyptian spokesman in Cairo insisted that the next steps should be to disentangle military forces west of the canal, "returning them to positions of October 22," and to secure Egyptian road communications to Suez City and the east bank. He sidestepped a question on the blockade of the Bab al-Mandab, the southern entrance to the Red Sea.

Talks between Egyptian and Israeli officers will resume today; they are to deal with exchange of prisoners of war. There have been no reports of fighting since the six-point accord was signed.

In Tel Aviv, leaders of the opposition group, Likud, decided last night to oppose the new agreement. Likud objects that the accord does not include provisions for lifting the blockade of the Bab al-Mandab. In addition, the opposition group contends that, in effect, the siege of the Egyptian Third Army has been lifted. More important, Likud argues that the Meir government lacks a mandate to speak for Israel. The opposition points out that the government's term in office ended on October 28, but it has remained in power until new elections--postponed because of the war--are held on December 31. Likud has demanded that the cabinet recognize that only a new government has the authority to negotiate future settlements.

Meanwhile, in an Israeli television interview, Deputy Prime Minister Allon said that negotiations could not possibly become substantive before the elections. He stated that many Israelis, including himself, think the government needs a new mandate before concluding further agreements.

The controversy over Israel's conduct of the war is also growing. The cabinet announced yesterday that Mrs. Meir has proposed a full investigation, and that the army would conduct an inquiry of its own. Earlier, Foreign Minister Eban had criticized Dayan's handling of the war and Israeli preparedness,

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and called for a special commission to look into these matters. In addition, Major General Sharon, a top Israeli commander on the Egyptian front, has criticized the Israeli high command for its conduct of the war. Sharon is a leader of Likud.

* * *

Yasir Arafat, Fatah leader and Palestine Liberation Organization chairman, left for Moscow yesterday after consultations with President Sadat in Cairo, according to a press report. Arafat's stopover in Egypt follows a meeting with King Faysal on November 10 and earlier meetings with other Arab leaders. Fatah reportedly has been in the forefront of the commando groups favoring fedayeen participation in a peace conference. 25X1

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A Soviet TASS official in Cairo [redacted] commented on Soviet surface-to-surface missiles in Egypt during a conversation with a US diplomat on November 10. The Soviet said that, under considerable pressure from the Egyptians, Moscow agreed to send a "limited number" of these missiles, and that they arrived shortly before October 16--the day Sadat claimed Egypt had a missile capable of striking Israel. [redacted] 25X1 25X1 25X1

The TASS official contended that the surface-to-surface missiles are manned by Soviet crews and remain under exclusive Soviet control. He described their purpose as deterrent or, failing that, retaliatory. The missiles, he said, are there to pose a convincing threat against Israeli civilian targets in the event Tel Aviv is tempted to strike directly at Cairo or other Egyptian population centers. Avoiding any reference to a nuclear capability, he stressed that the impact of the missiles is primarily political, especially in view of the "small size of the warhead."

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This account of Soviet motives seems plausible. The accuracy of the Scud is such that with a 2,000-pound conventional warhead it would have little value against military targets, but might be used effectively as a terror weapon against cities. Scuds deployed in northeastern Egypt could reach Tel Aviv. Moreover, since the Israelis can not be altogether sure that nuclear warheads will never be used, the weapon has considerable deterrent value.

Seven Soviet ships, including two major surface combatants and two submarines, have left the Mediterannean since November 9. Soviet naval strength in the Mediterannean is now down to 83 ships, including 21 surface combatants, 21 submarines, and various support vessels. 25X1

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There have been no flights of Soviet transport aircraft associated with the arms resupply effort in over five days.

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WEST GERMANY - CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Bonn and Prague seem prepared to sign a treaty of reconciliation and to establish diplomatic relations. Ready for signature six months ago, the treaty was held up because the Czechs refused to bow to Bonn's insistence that its prospective embassy be authorized to represent West Berlin legal institutions.

In order to break the impasse, the West Germans came up with a compromise proposal which would permit West Berlin and West German courts to deal directly with counterparts in Eastern Europe. Foreign Minister Scheel broached this during his visit to Moscow from October 31 to November 3, but the Soviets were noncommittal. On November 5, the Czech foreign minister also went to Moscow for consultations, and two days later Bonn's Foreign Office Political Director Van Well arrived in Prague to resume the direct dialogue broken off last August.

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The Soviets and Czechs will remain reluctant to accede to any arrangement, such as the one proposed, that would tend to buttress Bonn's claim that special ties exist between the Federal Republic and West Berlin. They may hope that a desire to breathe new life into Ostpolitik will induce further give in the West German position.

Bonn may now be prepared to go ahead and sign the treaty before reaching full agreement on the West Berlin legal assistance question. There has been considerable feeling within the ruling coalition that Bonn's approach to the matter has been too rigid, and officials have been hinting at new flexibility. Coalition leaders evidently think they can ride out predictable criticism that the government has again given in to pressure from the East on a Berlin-related matter.

A West German Foreign Office spokesman told the US Embassy on November 10 that Chancellor Brandt and Scheel are expected to visit Prague at the turn of the month to sign the treaty. This would probably lead to early establishment of diplomatic relations with Hungary and Bulgaria as well, completing the treaty framework of Ostpolitik.

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INTERNATIONAL OIL

All Arab oil producers that signed the agreement on November 4 to reduce production by 25 percent seem to be complying.

Libya and Algeria, neither of which fully carried out the first agreement in October to cut production, apparently are falling in line this time. One of the US companies operating in Libya was told on Friday to cut its production by 25 percent. US officials in Algeria, relying on information concerning only two fields, report that Algeria has already cut production by at least 15 percent. Together the two countries produce about 17 percent of all Arab oil.

In addition, Iraq, which signed neither agreement, lost about 20-30 percent of its production because of war damage to its terminal at Baniyas, Syria.

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